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by Philips

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 Rick Tharp

A little powerhouse

July 10, 2004


I was a more than a little leary of ordering this. I've not had good luck with Philips electronics in the past, but this little wonder put those fears to rest. First of all, it looks great. I love the styling, although I'm still not real fond of the blonde speaker cabinets, but it's growing on me.

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March 17, 2006

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 M. Crutchfield

Very good stereo at a great price

March 8, 2007

Verified Purchase


This is a very nice stereo with great sound at a great price, I bought this for my wife for her birthday and had done an extensive search on the internet before choosing this one. It has allot of functions and great sound at a great price.

One person found this helpful

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 John Chorkawciw

Better than I expected

February 2, 2006

Verified Purchase


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I checked a lot of units when I decided to get a new stereo and read many reviews before deciding on this unit. I was not disappointed. It was easy to set up. The sound is great, the unit is easy to use, it doesn't take up a lot of room. It was all I could have asked for.

3 people found this helpful

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martin freeman

He loves it

January 16, 2007

Verified Purchase

bought this as a gift for my partner for Christmas. I was in New York when it arrived and he opened it and is wild about it. Perfect for our applications

2 people found this helpful

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John J. Healy

GOOD VALUE

March 18, 2006

Verified Purchase

Unit is well designed and functinal. The additon of the USB port keeps it ahead of other manufactures.

4 people found this helpful

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John P. Donohue

Im impressed

January 9, 2006

Verified Purchase

this component is great. i cant believe the sound and functionality for this price and manufacturer.

3 people found this helpful

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Vinny B

Value for Money

July 24, 2005

They say "You get what you pay for". But this mini home audio system is quite contrary to this generalization. I bought this system from amazon.com about 7 months back and I feel that if you're looking for a low priced system with a very decent quality output, you've come to the right stop.

Pros: The sound quality is more than decent and jars very little at the high end on most of the stuff that you play. Good build quality. Doesn't look tacky with a lot of cheap plastic sticking out from all ends. Plays CDs, CD-Rs and RWs. Plays MP3s and CD-audio formats.



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This audio system is good for students who would want to have one in their dorm to hook up to a computer system. The PC-Link is pathetic and not really impressive. The PC-Link software installation is not intuitive and I had a small driver installation problem on my laptop. I fixed this later on after realizing that I had a conflict with another device. It worked well with the desktop system though. If you're interested in wi-fi PC Link connectivity check out another model MCM770. Remote is full functional. Sleep timer feature is convenient. Radio reception is decent.

Cons: The startup process takes quite some time. With the CD player grinding from tray to tray before initializing. It gets a little irritating at times but one can still tolerate it considering the sound quality at a low price. Limited no of presets. You have to chose between the standard ones.

Nice system overall in it's class.

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L. D LaValle

Ok, but a bit a little muddy unless you use an equalizer

February 12, 2014

Being that this unit is not being sold new anymore, this review is for those coming across this Phillips MCM530 used.

I picked this unit up last night from a craigslist ad for \$35, so I got a good deal on a small stereo all in one unit to get me back into some decent sound.

Things got tough for a bit financially, and I've been used to using cheezy little computer speakers for playing my mp3's at home for the last few years.

I have done some home studio recording for a hobby a while back, so I have some basic knowledge on "sound coloring", in which this Phillips unit does, and that's not a good thing.

"Sound coloring" is when an audio system increases or decreases a particular frequency band in a song, particularly, the speakers being responsible for doing this.

An ideal situation, is a "flat" response, in which a system plays back a song exactly on how it was intended to sound by the recording engineers.

"Sound coloring" for example, could add a lot more bass (low end on the frequency band) to a song, giving a more "boomey" sound, and decreasing the mid-range, which is what this system does. The result is a "muddy sound".

You can make up for this by using an equalizer if you use a computer to play your music.

I'm not using the USB connector on this unit, but instead using the auxiliary out RCA plugs. I have an adapter the goes from male RCA to mini - plug female. From that, I'm using a male to male mini-audio jumper going into my imac computer. (You can do this on a PC also).

I use itunes to play my music into the Phillips MCM530 sound system.

I adjust the sound with the equalizer in itunes to make the system sound better.

For pop tunes, I increased the 1k, 2k, 8k, and 16k band up a bit, and brought down the 64k, and 125K a bit.

This makes a nice difference, of course you can futz with it yourself until you find a sweet spot.

I haven't used the cd player, and probably won't use it much, however, it's kind of annoying when you first turn the

unit on as it searches for cd's in the player.

One of the features that I like, is the "eco power" standby mode. The manual states that it uses less than 1/2 watt of power in this mode, so it uses very little power when off. (We use power strips to turn our electronics off to prevent parasitic drain), so this may be an exception to the power strip link, this way the clock does not have to be reset each time it's turned back on.

I wouldn't pay more than \$50 if you find this unit used somewhere. Under that, it's a nice bargain.

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A Kid's Review

Review from an audiophile

March 8, 2006

The MCM530 is beyond a doubt AMAZING. I had been looking for a small and nice looking stereo with decent "kick" and great highs. This system blew away all my expectations.

- The small speakers have a rediculously good projection. The entire room gets filled with crisp highs and clear lows.

- The bass is great, it seems to work off the principle that bass is proportional to the size of the incasement over the size of the sub. These small subs give off ridiculous bass. The box says the speakers range to 40Hz but i'm pretty sure they go down to a lot more, probably like 30Hz.

-This system has serious power. I live in a concrete dorm and it can manage to make the floors vibrate. I'm sure you could hear it 2 floors under me. I dare not turn it up all the way. The most I've ever cranked it up is a little passed half. The speakers move like CRAZY and I'm sure it could go up to much louder (and still sound clear), but it would probaby hurt and regardless I wouldn't want to blow the speakers. Bottom line: It's loud enough...

-Has a max sound button, you have to see it for yourself, pretty nifty. (sound not volume)

- The USB port work very well. Unlike running the sound from your computer into the AUX-in, when you run it through the USB port you completely by-pass your computer's soundcard. This allows the stereo to convert the data stream. The digital components of the stereo convert the bit stream to analog for higher sound quality. The end result is impressive - less than .4% THD which is unrivaled under \$1000. This lets LOUD music still sound beautiful.

-Cons:

-The stereo by itself is slightly bass heavy, you can easily change that if you run your music from your computer. Then you can use Windows Media Player (made for music match but it is compatible with WMP) which has an equalizer. Then if you amp up the highs, you can compensate the bass. ***make sure you don't raise it too much, you may max out some sound, which could make it sound HORRIBLE. TO prevent this you can use the "scope" visualization and play with the equalizer so that the sound doesn't max out on the wave (a flat line on top/bottom).***

-The equalizer presets on the stereo aren't that great (besides the max sound button).

-The remote can act funny at times, but only when using the USB connection.

-THIS CAN BE ANNOYING: since it has a digital amp, the volume has steps. Because the stereo can go to such loud volumes, the steps happen to be fairly large. Therefore, when you want background music, one may be too loud, but the step under it too quiet.

OVERALL: I HAVE ENJOYED THESE SPEAKERS ALOT and feel this is the biggest bang you can get for your buck - volume wise, and quality wise. I would expect any system which could rival it to be atleast \$500.

P.S. ***** The cd tray issue is totally over-rated, it's only like 10 full seconds, and less if you want to listen to the radio. *****

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Gravelly Guy

It used to do what I wanted, not anymore

December 2, 2007

I didnt buy from Amazon seller, I bought slightly used one off ebay for \$45 total shipped price. For the money, it beats the heck out of any new cheapo boom box.

Sound is very good for anything under \$100. Radio works well, easily picks up local stations I listen to. The cd player is bit fragile and mickey mouse as others have stated, but so far it works ok. It detects, reads, and plays the mp3 files from homemade cdrs just fine.

The usb cord and software wasnt included with one I purchased so cant comment on that. I use linux so it probably wouldnt work anyway. If I wanted to play music from my computer, I would just patch cord from computer sound card to it anyway rather than usb.

Oh people were commenting on the wood speaker cabinets. If you look from back of speaker, its just particle board with some kind of formica. Not real wood though it looks nice. I though it would be remarkable in this day and age to get real wood with low end sound system.

So now like most purchases, its just a matter of longevity of the product and for that only time will tell. In conclusion its a good little radio/cd player for what I paid. Even brand new I dont think its worth over \$100 any which way you figure it, but then I like lot of value for my money. I think \$45 was about right price for it.

EDIT: Ok its almost exactly 2 years later. The sound is still great. The radio tuner still works fine. The cd apparatus has gotten to clickity clack for half day at time in off=standby mode, got so annoying I even opened

the case to see if I could put an AC toggle switch on front to just cut all power to it when I wasnt using it. Unfortunately they have circuit boards on all four sides on inside of cabinet leaving no extra space for this, so stuck just plugging cord into an a switched outlet. It also no longer does very well with mp3 files burned to cdr. Matter fact it has become useless for that. It will play a straight factory cd if you are patient enough for it to check all the cd trays a few times.

Basically a nice FM radio if it didnt clickity clack the cdrom trays continuously when it goes into standby (like most modern electronics, it doesnt ever actually turn off unless unplugged or cord plugged in switched outlet). Probably could disconnect and disable cd player part of it if I knew which cable and for sure that it wouldnt disable the radio also. I'd much rather they had just used a cheapo computer cdrom that plays one cd at time and didnt clickity clack. I've never wanted to play more than one cd at time anyway.

2nd EDIT: Not that anybody cares at this point since Amazon hasnt sold this for some time. Imagine anybody that bought one of these has either tossed it or modified it by now. I did finally have to open it up again and start pulling wires. Tried them one by one until I found one for the cdplayer, left it off and taped it. The cdplayer had become totally useless, not able to play a cd, but still wanted to constantly rattle checking things, seemed to check trays at random and more frequently than ever. So now with that disconnected, I have a nice radio. And it is a good radio, that part of it continues to function great, and should last indefinitely. The hassle now is that the stupid case cooling fan runs 24/7. Assume by default since I unhooked the cdplayer. Or maybe it always has and now is just noisier with age? With just radio tuner being used anymore, probably can get away with disconnecting fan too. This stereo is right by my bed so that fan noise makes me unplug the thing except when I want to use it.

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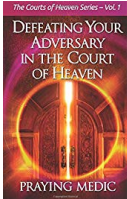
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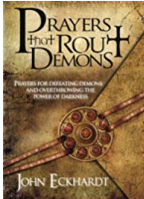
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






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